

## LESSON

## 13

## RETEACHING WORKSHEET

## Theme

## COPYMASTER

**Review** The **theme** of a literary work is the writer’s message about life or human nature. In fables or essays, the theme may be **stated** directly; in other genres, the theme is usually **implied**. A **recurring theme** is one that can be found in different texts of the same period. A theme that can be found throughout all of literature, that relates to people of all time periods and cultures, is a **universal theme**.

**Directions:** First **read** the boxed poem. Then **answer** the questions that follow.

My heart, thinking  
“How beautiful he is”  
Is like a swift river  
Which though one dams it  
5 and dams it  
Will still break through

—Lady Otomo (Japan, 8th century AD)  
*Translated by Arthur Waley*

1. What is the subject of the poem?
  - a. water and dams
  - b. the speaker’s emotions
2. Does the writer state the theme directly or is the theme implied?
  - a. stated
  - b. implied
3. To what does the speaker compare the heart?
  - a. a flowing river that cannot be stopped
  - b. thoughts of beauty
4. Write a statement of theme for the poem.  
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5. Do you think the theme of this 8th-century poem is universal or recurring? Explain.  
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